

In Memory of Hugh Herbison (1915-2009)

By Koozma J. Tarasoff — February 28, 2009

Hugh Herbison was a member of the [Religious Society of Friends, Quaker Community, Argenta, British Columbia](#). He lived near and worked closely with Doukhobors. Burial and Memorial have taken place in [Argenta, B.C.](#)

In 1933 Hugh was Secretary of the Student Christian Movement at the University of British Columbia. — [The Ubysey, Nov 17, 1933, page 3.](#)

In the 1950s, Hugh taught English at L.V. Rogers (old High School) and was the Principal at Jewett when it was three schools (one in Meadow Creek, one in Argenta and one in Cooper Creek). — [School Board Meeting Minutes, District No. 8 \(Kootenay Lake\), Creston BC, January 13, 2009.](#)

From 1950 to 1958, Hugh contributed 3 times to [The Inquirer](#):

- 'Conference of the Royal Commission and Delegates re Doukhobor Affairs held at the University of British Columbia, Aug. 30-31, 1950 — Part 4', Minutes — Speakers include Stefan S. Sorokin, Miss Leigh, Stuart Jamieson, Hugh Herbison, Mr Gower, John J. Verigin and Joe Podovnikoff. The group is dealing with continuing violence in the Kootenays of British Columbia. Zealot motives and behaviour are discussed. — [The Inquirer](#), Vol. 1, no. 7, August 1954, page 11.
- 'Let's Try a Different Method', Opinion by Hugh Herbison — A member of the Wider Quaker Fellowship deplores the lack of skills in dealing with zealotry in BC. Recalls the work of the Research and Consultative Committees of 1950-54 and summarizes the simple and workable solutions. — [The Inquirer](#), Vol. 5, nos. 3 & 4, April-May 1958, page 16.



Mr. Hugh Herbison
Taught Socials,
English, Latin.
Sponsor for Radio
Club and UN Club.
— [Nelson High School Teachers, 1954](#)



Hugh Herbison

- 'Wonderful Contribution', Letters to the Editor by Hugh Herbison — Writer: 'You are making a wonderful contribution by making both Doukhobors and non-Doukhobors aware of significant values in the Doukhobor religion and culture.' — [The Inquirer](#), Vol. 5, nos. 3 & 4, April-May 1958, page 29.

In [Harry B. Hawthorn](#) (ed.) [The Doukhobors of British Columbia](#) (Vancouver, BC: The University of British Columbia and J.M. Dent & Sons Canada Ltd., 1955), based on the *Report of the Doukhobor Research Committee*, which was presented to the Government of British Columbia in 1952, Hugh authored Chapter VI on Religion. The Editor's note states:

'Mr. Herbison, member of the wider Quaker Fellowship, who was employed by the Consultative Committee and living near Krestova in constant contact with Sons of Freedom [zealots] for two years, accepted the invitation to write a section on Doukhobor religion. In approaching this he faced a choice of reporting with external objectivity or of attempting to share their religious experience, and reporting largely from the standpoint of their own assumptions, values and beliefs. The second method of operation seemed to promise a contribution all the more distinctive because the studies of economics, personality and other aspects of Doukhobor life had been written largely from an external point of view. The following chapter differs, therefore, from most of the Report in that the nature and meaning of religious experience is often seen through Doukhobor (more especially Sons of Freedom) eyes.'

On November 1, 1958, Hugh was a member of the [Panel on the Doukhobor Question](#), University of British Columbia.

Hugh is a Founder of the B.C. Civil Liberties Association. On December 9, 1962, a meeting was convened at the University of British Columbia's International House to discuss the state of civil liberties in British Columbia. As a result of this meeting, the B.C. Civil Liberties



Alex visits with Mr. Hugh Herbison of Argenta, BC. — One-On-One with a Constituent. May 11, 2006.

History of Argenta Friends: [The Delta Co-op of Argenta : Memory. Quakerism, and Co-operative Studies in British Columbia during the 1950s](#)

Association was incorporated under the Societies Act on February 27, 1963. — [BCCLA Annual Report 2003, page 27](#). Also two Doukhobor founders were present, myself and George E. Trasov (changed from Tarasoff).

In January 21, 1979 he spoke at the World Religion Day in Castlegar of the long-standing relationship of Quakers with the Doukhobors (*Castlegar News*, February 1, 1979:A3). His article about the Doukhobor-Quaker connection appeared in the [Canadian Quaker History Journal](#) (Issue 27, July 1980).

In 2001, Hugh was interviewed 4 times for the 2002 film [The Spirit Wrestlers](#). — [Jim Hamm, An Inventory of His Doukhobor Research Collection In The Library of the University of British Columbia, Rare Books and Special Collections](#).

'Most of their lives, in the pursuit of social justice ... Agnes and Hugh Herbison of Argenta, with roots in the Quaker community, ... have been fighting for peace and justice for many years...' — [NDP MP Alex Atamanenko \(BC Southern Interior\), April 10, 2006](#).

Hugh contributed to research for the 2007 novel [Svoboda](#), by Bill Stenson, about Doukhobors.

Katherine Putt (Hugh Herbison's daughter, Victoria, BC) sent me the [following Obituary](#) of this memorable human being:

Hugh Herbison, born March 10, 1915, died on New Year's Day, 2009, after living a remarkably full life. Graduating from UBC in 1936, he crossed the country on freight trains and found work as a miner, logger, journalist and professional photographer. He graduated from Theological College in 1940, married Agnes Klinck, and began a brief career with the United Church, ministering by boat along BC's west coast. In the 1950s he served as liaison between the Consultative Committee on Doukhobor Affairs and the Sons of Freedom Doukhobors, eventually resigning his position in protest over

